

THE

Justice of Our National Cause,

AND THE MOMENTOUS ISSUES FOR OUR NATION, THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD,
WHICH ARE INVOLVED IN THE RESULT OF THE PRESENT CIVIL WAR.

A SERMON

PREACHED IN THE CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, BUFFALO, ON THURSDAY,
SEPTEMBER 26TH, A NATIONAL FAST DAY.

BY REV. JOHN C. LORD, D. D.

For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound who shall prepare himself to the battle?—I Cor., XIV, 8.

We are in a state of civil war; armies and munitions of battle, such as were never before seen on the Continent, are gathered together for a conflict more eventful, if not more bloody than the world has known for a thousand years.

The President of the United States, upon the request of Congress, calls upon the people to observe this day as a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer, to implore the Almighty, in the present fearful exigency, to give strength and wisdom to our Government, success to our arms and a speedy deliverance from the wide spread insurrection which threatens the disintegration of the Republic, and the destruction of all the guarantees of liberty and law.

Under the Hebrew dispensation it was the office of the Priests, in time of war, to sound the trumpet of alarm and address the people before they joined in battle with their enemies. This we learn from Deut. XX, 2: "And it shall be when ye are come nigh to the battle that the Priest shall approach and speak unto the people and he shall say unto them: 'Hear, O Israel, ye approach this day unto battle against your enemies, let not your hearts faint, fear not and do not tremble, neither be ye terrified because of them, And behold God himself is with us for our Captain and Priests with sounding trumpets.'"

If it was the office of those who ministered at the altar under the old dispensation to encourage the people about to engage in deadly strife with the assurance of the divine presence and aid, it cannot be doubted that it is a part of the appropriate work of the minister of Christ, in

a time like this, to set forth grounds of encouragement which may animate the hearts and increase the courage of the people, to show that the origin and issues of the existing war are such as to assure us of the favor and protection of God in our efforts to crush out this rebellion and to bring back to their allegiance those who are attempting the overthrow of our Government and the disintegration of the Republic.

Our fasting will be but a vain ceremony, our prayers but a mockery if we have not truth and justice on our side. God cannot be deceived, nor will He be mocked, and religious zeal, earnest prayer, and a humiliation real or affected, will never make up the deficiencies of a bad cause. The following passages from the divine oracles abundantly sustain this position, "Behold ye fast for strife and debate and to smite with the fist of wickedness; ye shall not fast as ye do this day to make your voice to be heard on high. Is this such a fast as I have chosen, a day for a man to afflict his soul, is it to bow down his head as a bulrush and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Wilt thou call this a fast and an acceptable day unto the Lord? Is not this the fast that I have chosen to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens and let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? When they fast I will not hear their cry, and when they offer burnt offerings and an oblation I will not accept them, but I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence."

In this desolating war there is fasting and prayer on both sides. The leaders of the attempted revolution have more than once appointed days of humiliation. They too appeal to the

ETERNAL JUSTICE and strike at the government, the laws and the constitution in the name of God. The first question to be determined then is this, on which side is truth and justice in this terrible conflict? Which army is in fact contending for liberty? Who are the aggressors in this war which is already desolating entire States? Who are responsible for this deadly struggle which has driven hundreds of families from their hearths, destroyed thousands of lives and wasted millions of treasure? Who are the true authors of the conflagrations, the robberies, the murders which have filled the land with terror and the heavens with the thunders of approaching judgment? If it be the peculiar duty of any order of men to exhibit the religious aspects of this conflict, to explore the real causes which underlie this outbreak of destructive forces, to point out the reasons which lead us to believe that God is on our side, and will go forth as our captain, and confidently to invoke him in the language of the inspired king of Israel, "Gird *on* thy sword upon thy thigh O most Mighty with thy glory and thy majesty;" if there be a class whose official duty it is to ascertain on which side of this controversy truth and righteousness are to be found, no one will pretend to deny that the ministers of religion, who are teachers of ethics, are that class; for to them belongs, more than to any others, the decision of questions of conscience in the light of divine truth; to them as the conservators of morals, appertains the discussion and decision of the moral aspects of an insurrection which threatens alike the unity of the State and the church.

In the text the Apostle illustrates the duty of the gospel Minister to speak plainly and boldly, that which he is appointed to utter, by a figure borrowed from the ancient practice before suggested, of the blowing of the trumpets by the Priests to summon the people to battle. By no uncertain or doubtful note could the people be aroused and prepared for the approaching conflict. The words of the Apostle in this place have a peculiar significance in their application to our present circumstances. The people of the United States, in a time like this, can be aroused to a true comprehension of the magnitude of the issues involved in the present war by no uncertain sound of the trumpet. They can be prepared for the impending conflict by no doubtful opinions, no timid counsels, no cowardly suggestion of compromise with an armed and ferocious rebellion, with no prophecies of disunion, disaster and defeat. What they need to know, to nerve them to the necessary sacrifices, to prepare them for the battle which is to decide the question of our national existence, is the *justice* of their cause; that the war is of God for the defence of human rights, and that its results involve all that we hold dear as Christian freemen. If the people believe that God is with them, if they see that this disastrous war is forced upon them for the maintenance of civil and religious liberty, if they understand how the progress of freedom throughout the world is

bound up in the defeat of this gigantic conspiracy to make slavery dominant on this continent, then the trumpet that summons them to arms will soon utter the notes of victory and the armies of the enemy will be swept away as chaff before the storm and as a rolling thing before the whirlwind.

We shall attempt in this discourse to give the trumpet a certain sound, that you may be prepared for the conflict by understanding its character and its inevitable results, and we propose in the first place to consider the justice of our national cause, and in the second to point out the momentous issues for the Nation, the Church and the World which are involved in the war. The justice of our national cause is apparent in the fact that the General Government has never given the least occasion for the revolt of the Southern Secessionists. It is not pretended that the Government has in any manner violated their rights or interfered with their domestic institutions. They revolted during an administration of their own choice, an administration which with a forbearance, weak, if not criminal, suffered them to plunder the public treasury, to seize the property of the United States and confiscate it to their own use, while their leaders were permitted with impunity to violate their oft repeated oaths of allegiance under the very shadow of the Capitol and in possession of the most important offices of state. Nothing so marks the profligate character of this insurrection as the utter disregard of their oaths of office and the total want of all honorable feeling exhibited in the shameless treason of public functionaries in the service of the General Government, some of whom had been educated by the country and all of whom were bound by the most solemn obligations to its service. If ever men deserved the axe or the cord, if preeminence in shame and dishonor were ever earned by a violation of all esteemed binding or held sacred by mankind, if the indignation of the Supreme Judge was ever specially excited by acts of unexampled treachery, then the base conduct of a multitude of officials at Washington will go down on the pages of history as exhibiting a depth of infamy unfathomed before in the records of treason and falsehood. No greater punishment could be inflicted upon such men, and especially upon the officers of the army and navy who have abandoned their flag and violated their oaths, than to be compelled to read the record which posterity will make and mankind peruse, of conduct which implies the basest ingratitude and the most consummate treachery, compared with which desertion in the presence of an enemy and cowardice in the battlefield will be considered comparatively blameless. Dare such men appeal to a God of truth in aid of a cause inaugurated in such infamy? As well might the ancient assassin who clasped the hand of Amasa in apparent friendship, stabbing him under the fifth rib at the very moment of the treacherous embrace, invoke the divine blessing over the dead body of his victim.

The justice of our national cause is seen again in the insufficiency of the alleged grounds of this revolt. If all the revolutionists claim were conceded, it fails to establish a just or reasonable cause of insurrection. The existence of an ultra and uncomfortable abolitionism at the North, threatening their social institutions, is among the most prominent of the causes alleged by Southern, as well as by the few Northern secessionists who uphold their cause as the provocation of the attempt to destroy the Republic. Now, the secessionists know as well as we do that in a free State, in times of peace, the existence and avowal of ultra and fanatical opinions cannot be prevented. Our most sacred foundations, our holiest beliefs, are rudely assailed under the very shadow of our sanctuaries. Infidelity and Atheism in their various forms, from the press, the forum, and the lecturer's desk, are free to attack, and do attack our religious convictions, our social system, and all the hallowed foundations of law and order, of Christianity and civilization. So long as we are at liberty to defend our principles, to preach the Gospel of Christ, to exalt the Bible as the charter of our liberties, we do not complain; neither is the complaint which is professedly at the basis of the great rebellion well grounded; for the slave system, like every other, is open to discussion in a free government; like every other form of social order it must defend itself, if it can, and it only betrays its inherent weakness by its extreme sensitiveness. Besides, the secessionists know as well as we do that that there were never among the twenty-two millions of the North a hundred thousand voters who maintained these extreme views or who desired to interfere with their domestic relations, however much they might prefer their own.

The Legislation of some of the Northern States adverse to the rendition of fugitive slaves, was another, and perhaps the most plausible of all the alleged grounds of revolt. But this is as untenable as the other, because the Constitution interposes between the legislation of the States and the people of the United States, a judicial tribunal competent to annul and make void all unconstitutional State legislation. When has this august court failed to discharge its duty in this behalf? Practically, all this foolish State legislation was inoperative, and is now made a pretext of the war upon the General Government, who had ever faithfully discharged its duties to the South, restoring to their owners fugitive slaves out of such hot beds of abolitionism as the Western Reserve, and incarcerating the violators of the law in prisons, surrounded by a population fiercely opposed to the fugitive slave bill.

Another alleged ground of revolution is the opposition of the free States to the increase of slave territory. This matter, supposed to be finally settled by the Missouri Compromise about forty years since, was reopened by Southern influences, and thus the territorial question became again an agitating element in our affairs. Slavery propagandism, unwilling longer to be con-

fined to the bounds within which it had consented to be limited in 1820, attempted a revolution and plunged a peaceful and prosperous country into a terrible civil war, because the North resisted the effort to give slavery a foothold in all the territories; because the North refused to make slavery national, which in its nature and by the Constitution was local and sectional. For the Constitution makes no direct mention of slavery; it imposes no obligation upon the North to aid in its increase for the purpose of preserving an equilibrium between the free and slave States. The progress of each part of the Union was left to the laws of nature and providence. The framers of the Constitution use the equivocal term of "persons held to service" in the only clause which relates to slaves and their rendition in case of escape. It is well known that the Fathers of the Republic were unwilling to recognize slavery in the charter of American liberty, because they saw that it was an anomaly in a free State, the basis of which was laid in the declaration of the right of all men to 'life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.' They acknowledged it to be an evil which all, both North and South, believed would gradually but surely disappear with the advancing prosperity and civilization of the country. Who then have violated the spirit and even the letter of the Constitution? Who have misconstrued and garbled the charter of our liberties? Who have perverted its provision and been ready to sacrifice it altogether for the sake of an extension of the slave system, which was never dreamed of by its Fathers and founders." "I speak to wise men, judge ye what I say."

Another alleged cause of this revolt was the election of a sectional candidate to the Presidency. This was undoubtedly considered a calamity by all conservative men, although strictly within the forms of the Constitution. But does not the responsibility of the election rest upon the leaders of the great rebellion? By the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, by the attempt to make slavery a National institution, in violation of the Constitution, and the declared intent of its framers, did they not force upon the North a sectional position. Did they not even sectionalize the great Democratic party by their extravagant claims at the Charleston Convention, and by their refusal to unite upon any National man who could be elected? What but the need of a pretext for rebellion, which was already a foregone conclusion with these men, led them to divide and distract the only political party who could have resisted the growing tendencies to a sectional election,—tendencies at the North resulting from a Southern sectionalism, which for thirty years has recognized no other interest in the Republic but slavery, and whose exactions in its behalf have been like those of the "daughters of the Horseleech, ever crying give, give."

But passing from these professed causes of the revolt, let us look at the real grounds of it, and see if it be based upon any principles of truth

and justice, likely to secure for it the favor of Him who 'ruleth' in the armies of Heaven and among the inhabitants of the Earth.'

We may notice, first, as one of the real causes of this great outbreak of slavery propagandism, the increased and increasing prosperity and population of the North, in contrast with that of the South, making it impossible that the latter should long retain the power and prestige of the government. There was a real cause; but was it a just cause of revolt? Was it not rather a providential manifestation of the superiority of free labor, both in an economical and moral point of view. If Virginia, from the first position in the Union in wealth and population, had fallen in seventy years to the seventh, was this a reason why she should seek to destroy the government, and defile the graves and the memory of her own immortal sons, one of whom is justly styled the Father of his country? Was not the divine providence teaching this ancient but effete commonwealth to conform herself in her domestic institutions to the law of progress? Was it not God's judgment against the breeding and selling of men as cattle as a main matter of business and subsistence? Must the first law, the fundamental principle of a republican form of government, that the majority must govern, be abandoned because by the inherent weakness of the slave system the slave States are in the minority? Do they expect to force upon the North a compromise by which the minority are to possess the government in perpetuity? Will they for this break the sacred compact of our fathers, disintegrate the Great Republic, violate their oft repeated oaths to support and defend the Constitution as the supreme law, and call down upon their heads for their perjury, the just judgment of God?

Another cause of this insurrection is found in the newly discovered moral status of the slave system and its newly seen superiority over every other form of civilization. This the South concedes to be a new revelation, unknown to their fathers; a foundation rejected by them, but the chief stone in the corner of this great conspiracy. They have learned at last that the divine decree "in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread" is designed for the African, and is not applicable to the Caucasian race. They have discovered that domestic slavery should of right be transferred from the *lowest* to the *highest* place in christian civilization, and in defiance of the opinions of mankind, of the word and providence of God, and in utter abandonment of their own former sentiments, to exalt it as the grand desideratum of society, the most elevating of all social systems, the herald of a millennial state, and they would constrain all men, and particularly the freemen of the North, to fall down and worship this golden image of their idolatry. Conceding, as all conservative men have done, that slavery has been tolerated, as are other evils in our fallen world, by the Supreme Ruler; admitting that the holding of slaves under the sanction of law is not necessarily an immorality; de-

nying to no man the christian name and character or christian communion merely because he lives in a slave state and is the holder of slaves; contending always in past time for the strict observance of the guarantees of the Constitution, express or implied in their behalf, we have maintained the right of our Southern brethren to retain, undisturbed by us, their peculiar domestic institution until time and patience and God's holy providence should work its removal with their own consent. But we have never believed or maintained that African servitude was anything better than a relic of barbarism, the inheritance of dark ages and despotic governments. We have never doubted that it was the lowest form of christian civilization, destined to disappear on this continent as it has in Europe, by a gradual process of reform. To make the elevation and enlargement of such a social economy the ground of a revolution, to plunge a great nation in a sea of blood in order to build up and give predominance to such a system, to lay the foundation of a vast slave empire upon the ruins of our great and glorious Republic, which in eighty years has advanced us to the front rank of great nations, with a rapidity which has no parallel in history, is perhaps the most intolerable insult ever offered to earth or Heaven. No revolution was ever before attempted upon so base a foundation. No body of men have ever before conspired to found a new nationality upon so atrocious a platform. Think, for a moment, what must be the character in the sight of God of a revolt to perpetuate slavery, an insurrection to put down free speech and free labor, a revolution not to "break every yoke," but to bind them more firmly on the necks of men. Former revolutions have been really or professedly attempted for liberty. This is the first for servitude. Commonly, men have risen against their oppressors and masters; but here we have a rising of five or six millions of white men to secure the perpetual bondage of four millions of blacks. What a new horror is this in the 19th century! What a spectacle to angels and men, of Anglo-Saxon progress in the New World!

Is it not an insult to that divine Redeemer who came into the world to "break every yoke and let every captive go free?" Is not the opening of the prison doors the sign of the final triumph of the Son of God? How seared must be the consciences of men who can appeal to the All Wise and All Merciful in behalf of such a cause as this, with the conflagrations they have kindled crackling in their ears, with the blood they have shed crying aloud for vengeance, and in sight of ruined habitations, depopulated towns and unburied corpses in the battle-field—all the result of a despotic temper which must rule or ruin,—all the effect of an inordinate ambition demanding the elevation of a system of domestic despotism upon the supremacy of which their personal power and political prominence can alone be perpetuated. Most confidently do we appeal to the eternal Judge to give success to our armed resistance of these intolerable claims, of this

murderous assault upon the life of the nation, of this atrocious attempt to revolutionise us back to barbarism. With confidence we adopt the ancient Hebrew prayer, "Keep not thou silence, O God, hold not thy peace and be not still, O God, for lo, these enemies make a tumult, and they that hate thee have lifted up the head, they have taken crafty counsel against thy people, they have said come and let us cut them off *from being a nation*, that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance, for they have conspired together, with one consent they are CONFEDERATE against Thee. O, my God, make them as a wheel and as stubble before the wind."

Another of the real causes of the great insurrection is to be found in the influence of domestic slavery upon the habits and passions of the dominant race. The possession of unlimited power is perhaps a greater misfortune to the master than the slave. It begets, ordinarily, an irritable temper, an overbearing manner, and a habit of despotism in all the relations of society and government. There can be no other explanation of the wickedness and violence of this outbreak against the public peace; nothing else can explain the outrageous barbarism which has made the rule of the insurgents at the South a new reign of terror. An examination of any of their newspaper organs, with their base charges, their brutal epithets, their murderous threats, must convince all men what cruel tempers and what degrading passions result from the system of American Slavery. It is this fierce and reckless disposition, in connection with the fact that labor is the badge of servitude in the South, which explains the mustering of such vast armies at the bidding of leaders who are and have been without money and without credit. Nowhere else could such a result have been accomplished; only an idle and passionate population could have been gathered into an army in so short a period, or remained in the field unpaid and poorly provisioned to the present time. This is their element of strength, *and it is the only one*. The language of Jacob concerning Simeon and Levi seems peculiarly applicable to the case of our insurgent countrymen: "Simeon and Levi are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations. O, my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united; for in their anger they slew a man, and in their self-will they digged down a wall. Cursed be their anger for it was fierce, and their wrath, for it was cruel. I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel."

The fact that the most conservative men are not only arrayed against this insurrection, and are prominent in their devotion to the country, but are becoming decidedly hostile to the system of slavery, is of easy explanation. No true man at the North is so much in love with slavery as to value it above the Union, or wish to continue its existence at the cost of the integrity of the Republic. When the slave despotism is seen to be the moving cause of this rebellion, which is evident to all men of ordinary sagacity, they are

constrained to view it as a dangerous element in our political system, to be resisted and abated so far and so fast as it can be wisely and constitutionally done. When domestic slavery is thought to be in antagonism to our national unity, all patriotic men are at once armed against it; and a little reflection would have shown the rebel leaders that such must be the inevitable result, and that those who defended the Constitution in their behalf while they were loyal to it would, upon precisely the same principle, defend it against the assaults of the slave interest, which, ceasing to be loyal to the charter of our liberties, lost all claim to its protection.

The noble men at the South who have remained loyal to the Constitution should be protected and indemnified under all circumstances and in all changes which may grow out of the suppression of the revolt, and while life and property are justly forfeited by traitors, the North should tax itself to the last dollar to save from pecuniary loss the true Patriots in the Slave States who have stood at the hazard of their lives by the flag of their country. But it ought not to be forgotten that the conservative men of the North have seen with astonishment and horror these new developments of the influence of slavery upon the masses of the South; they have read with pain and sorrow this new chapter in its history, and they are compelled to believe that it is rapidly proving its incompatibility with free political institutions. Should the present civil war complete the demonstration by the final adherence of the great body of slaveholders to the traitors who have inaugurated it, the most conservative men amongst us must denounce the system upon the evidence of its fruits. "Do men," says our blessed Lord, "gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles." As the Carthaginian Hamilcar made Hannibal swear upon his country's altar eternal hatred to Rome, so fathers at the North will pledge their sons to undying hostility to the domestic institution of the South. The great rebellion is rapidly forcing the nation toward the adoption of a new political creed which will proclaim for its dogma "AMERICA FOR WHITE MEN AND FREE WHITE LABOR!" The platform of abolitionism looked only to the elevation of the slave; the platform which the war is forcing upon the North will regard the interests of the white man and seek his elevation and the economical interests and permanent union of the Republic. God seems to have given up the authors of this revolt to judicial blindness when they arrayed domestic slavery against the Union and the Constitution; for the secession they proclaimed was equivalent to an act of emancipation, and the guns discharged against Fort Sumter announced before earth and heaven the beginning of the end of African servitude. So wonderfully does the Most High accomplish his purposes, causing the wrath of man to praise him, "taking the wise in their own craftiness and carrying the counsel of the froward headlong." So far as we can judge of the purpose and providence of God in the insur-

rection, it has but a single reading in regard to slavery, and that is found in the hand writing on the walls of the Chaldean king, "Mene, mene, tekel upharsin;" it is weighed in the balances and found wanting, and the kingdom has departed from it.

Between the conflict of these opposing forces the danger is that the black man may be ground to powder. By multitudes, his presence on this continent either as bond or free will be strongly resisted. May the Almighty friend of this unfortunate race, always "more sinned against than sinning," open up for them avenues of escape and deliver them by the doors of colonization in Africa, and those which may be opened on this continent, from the calamities which impend over them. A righteous retribution it would be upon the turbulent originators of the insurrection against the nation, to give the African in perpetuity the States of South Carolina and Florida, in which a loyal man can scarcely be found.

We are to consider in the second place the momentous issues for the Nation, the Church and the World, which are involved in the result of the present civil war.

The right of a State to secede from the Union is not the least of the questions to be determined by the present conflict. As an abstract claim, this pretended right of a State to secede from the nationality to which it belongs may easily be shown to be a most transparent fallacy. Two sovereignties on the same territory are not possible. The Constitution of the United States is the supreme law of the land, and whatever in a State constitution or in State action is contrary to it is *ipso facto* void. This is settled by the design of the Constitution, by its terms and the terms of every State constitution and the oaths prescribed by law to all officials both in the State and General Governments. Secession is anarchy; it makes the new Confederacy but a rope of sand, and is as ruinous to the South as to the nation. Their real interests no less than ours demand that it should be utterly and forever repudiated at any cost. This venomous serpent of secession is now at the cradle of our young Republic. God grant that like the infant Hercules she may throttle the reptile that seeks her life.

Should this formidable conspiracy against the Government succeed, the *fact* if not the *right* of secession will be established. The disintegrating process once commenced must continue until the Great Republic, whose shadowing wings are now the refuge of the oppressed of every nation, will be divided into forty independent States and territories, always warring and always weak, making the very name of a Republic odious to mankind. Says Mr. Stephens of Georgia, one of the leading spirits of the great conspiracy and perhaps the ablest statesman of them all, "the process of disintegration in the old Union may be expected to go on *with almost absolute certainty*. We are now the nucleus of a great power which, if we are true to ourselves, our destiny and high mission, will become the *controlling power of this Continent*." We have heard of men kept to-

gether by "the cohesive power of public plunder," and Vice President Stephens informs us that the cohesive power of slavery is expected to keep together the seceding States so that in the general disintegration of the Republic they will necessarily become the 'controlling power on this Continent.' Here then, is another issue which the traitors themselves affirm is involved in the result of the war which they wage against us. They intend to make the slave power dominant on this continent; they demand the control of North America; for this they are in arms; this, if they succeed, must be the result—and what a result! A great Slave Oligarchy the controlling power in America! 'O lame and impotent conclusion' of the drama of our Revolution! For myself, I had rather the Almighty should sink the continent in the sea, or that the nation should nobly perish on the battle field for freedom, than submit to this inglorious result—to the lamentable degradation of our national prostration at the footstool of slavery.

That our Nationality is involved in the present civil war can be denied by none. It is a question of the life or death of the Republic; it is either the cementing process of our Union, or its irretrievable destruction. If we do not stand by the country at such a time and with such an issue before us, we do not deserve a country, and are only fit for "treasons, stratagems and spoils." If we refuse any sacrifice of life or fortune in such a struggle, we deserve a despotism, and one that has in it the crack of the slave-driver's whip. If we tamely submit to this treason, and to the demands of these traitors, the scorn of mankind and the contempt of posterity will pursue our memories to the end of time. But, brethren, we not only hope, but we know better things of you, and things that work for the salvation of our beloved country. What means this vast audience, assembled to call down the divine blessing upon our nation? It means that you intend to resist traitors and would-be tyrants as an act of obedience to God. Is not the same thing signified by the presence of this military company, most of whom have passed the period of military service, and who represent the intellect, the influence and the wealth of Buffalo, with an Ex-President of the United States at their head, who has not thought it inappropriate to his former lofty position, but rather in accordance with the genius of our institutions and the exigences of the present national crisis, to accept the command of a volunteer company of his fellow citizens; an act for which, with many others, the country will ever venerate the name of Millard Fillmore.

The destruction of our nationality is already announced in Europe. Kings and nobles rejoice at our anticipated fall. The London *Times*, the organ of the English aristocracy, continues to assure us that we have no choice but to submit to the dictation of traitors, and consent to the disruption of the Republic. We are represented as destitute of courage and unworthy of credit. Exeter Hall, resonant through so many years

with denunciations of slavery, and of the North for not resisting its aggressions, is silent now when it is the throat of freedom, and the death struggle of the opposing systems is visible in the sight of all men. For whatever may be pretended, whatever color the necessities of the Government in their proper conformity to the Constitution may give to the present status of the war, no man of comprehensive vision has failed to discover the real issue between slavery and freedom forced upon us by traitors, in arms, not for the protection, but for the dominance of a slave propagandism. Only from the Emperor of Russia, out of all Europe, have we received sympathy, consolation and encouragement in our desperate struggle with the slave oligarchy. None from the Government of the Father-land, none from the aristocracy of England, none from the nation from whom we are descended, and whose natural allies, but for this, we should have been in the day of her calamity; for that day comes as certainly to nations as to men. A century will not heal the breach which Great Britain has made between herself and the Great Republic; for great, united and prosperous she will come out of this conflict, notwithstanding the croakings of the *Times* and its patrons. They will never be invited to attend her obsequies, or asked to loan money to defray the funeral expenses.

Like a giant from wine, the Republic is aroused from her apathy. She requires neither arms nor money from England, nor even sympathy. She only intends to exact a decent neutrality; she is content with the noble letter dictated by the Czar of all the Russias, the monarch of half of Europe and Asia, who in his philanthropic efforts to emancipate his slave subjects has encountered, as did his father before him, a ferocious opposition, a bigoted arrogance and a brutal obstinacy on the part of the serf owners, which led him to understand and appreciate the nature and difficulties of our struggle with the slave power. More in sorrow than in anger, in view of the exultation of some of the European powers over our anticipated fall, do we lift up the ancient anthem of the church of God, "O Lord God of Hosts how long wilt thou be angry against the prayer of thy people; thou feedest them with the bread of tears and givest them tears to drink in great measure; thou makest us a strife unto our neighbors, and our enemies laugh among themselves. Turn us again O Lord of Hosts, and we shall be saved."

Before considering the issues of this war in respect to the Church, it will be proper to say something of the past and present attitude of that branch of it with which as Pastor and people we are connected. It is well understood that the position of the Old School Presbyterian Church in all this controversy has been eminently conservative. Of all her ministers, the Pastor of this Church has been one of the most conservative. It has been charged that we have changed front, and are now taking a position opposed to our former conservatism. The truth is, slavery has changed front, and we are compelled

to act under an entirely new state of facts; and it is easy to see that our present and former positions are altogether consistent. We were for the Union, the Constitution and the Laws when these were assailed by a fanatic abolitionism. We stand upon precisely the same ground when a fanatical slavery propagandism has made war upon the Constitution and the laws, and threatens by force of arms the destruction of the Republic. We denounced the principles of the former, because they were anti-scriptural and looked to the ruin of our nationality. Upon the same basis, and with entire consistency, we denounce the latter, and resist them the more earnestly because they seek to accomplish by an armed rebellion and with murderous violence that which the ultraists of the North only maintained in theory and by words.

Ten years ago we were called "Union Savers," and ironically represented as "Union Saving Committees." Are we not now seeking to save the Union, and has not the Union Saving Committee become, to use a parliamentary figure, a committee of the whole? Besides, as christian ministers, we felt it our duty to investigate the moral causes of the fierce and bloody outbreak which is making our beloved land a field of blood and a place of tears, and we find no other satisfactory explanation of it than the existence of domestic despotism at the South, and in all integrity we say so. Is this an inconsistency? A neighbor whose character was passably fair lives by us for several years, and we have thought of him and spoken of him favorably; but he commits robbery and murder, and sets fire to our dwelling; shall we not at once denounce him? Are we bound to treat him as before, to maintain our consistency?

The Abolitionists demanded the immediate emancipation of the black man for his sole benefit, at the hazard of the Union, and in violation of the Constitution. We advocate a safe and judicious emancipation for the benefit of the white man, to improve his condition and his character, for the safety of the Union and the preservation of the Constitution. We may be in advance of public sentiment, but it must come to this at last, as the only sure solution of our difficulties, the only certain basis of a permanent Union, and the development of the great Republic.

In view of the position and temper of the insurgents, it is manifest that their success must involve the loss of liberty to the Church of Christ, so fast and so far as their power is extended. In past time they have been but partially satisfied with the toleration of slavery under the guards laid down by the Apostles. They demand now of the Church, not the toleration of their system of servitude as a temporary institution, but its canonization as the best form of domestic and social life. This anti-christian dogma has been promulgated throughout the South, and advocated alike from the pulpit and the forum. If the insurgents compel a division of the country and establish a separate nationality,

no man, no minister of Christ will be allowed to promulgate any other doctrine but at the hazard of his life. If the revolutionists establish a controlling power on this continent, as they propose to do, they will put a bridle in the mouth of every clergyman from the Bay of Massachusetts to the Gulf of Mexico. They call all men who do not conform to these ultra and infidel views "Abolitionists," and more than one clergyman has already suffered a violent death at their hands. Alas for the church of God when she is compelled to deify slavery and preach a gospel whose highest form of civilization, whose promised progress is toward a system of universal servitude, and whose sign of the second coming of the Son of Man to his millennial kingdom will be the *universal division of society into Masters and Slaves*. To this preposterous and blasphemous conclusion the premises of the secession heresy bring us by an inexorable logic.

Moreover, our Missionary institutions, our Bible and Tract Societies, are "American" in name and fact; and their progress, their continued usefulness, their saving influences, are bound up in the unity of the nation, and must perish in its fall. The division of the country must be followed by the disruption of all our Church institutions. From being national, they will become sectional; and as the Republic perishes, so all these noble foundations, these life giving charities, will dissolve and perish. Alas for the day when the streams of Christian benevolence shall be dried up, when the flow of Divine truth from the New World into the dark places and the waste places of the Old World shall cease, when the "wilderness and the solitary place" shall no more be made glad by the footstep of the American missionary, when all our glorious institutions for the propagation of the gospel shall be buried, as they must be, in the grave of our nationality! By your love for the Church, by your allegiance to Christ, by your regard for the souls of those who dwell in the darkness of Paganism, and in the valley of the shadow of death, I beseech you, Christian brethren, stand by your country in such a time as this; hesitate at no sacrifices to put down an armed rebellion which assaults the Republic; for with the life of the nation is bound up every interest and every hope of the Church of God.

Finally, what momentous interests for the world are involved in the result of this civil war, waged by traitors for the disintegration of the nation!

There never was a conflict among men more important in its influence upon mankind. History will record it as the final determination of the long mooted question, "whether a great empire, with a vast territory, can maintain itself under a Republican form of government." "Whether such a state without a king can preserve free institutions alike against foreign ag-

gression and domestic treason?" whether "a church without a hierarchy can exist independent of government by the voluntary contribution of the people?" The long disputed question whether man, under any circumstance, is capable of self-government, is now at length to be determined. If the last, the grandest and most promising attempt to establish political liberty in the New World, away from the influence of Monarchies, fails, there is an end of all further experiments. King-craft and Priest-craft, from the day of our National ruin, will hold undisputed sway as the only sound and desirable foundations of government and society, and all the hopes and aspirations of the down trodden masses over the entire world will perish for ever, as they behold that magnificent Star of Empire in the Western hemisphere, in which shone the only promise of political redemption for mankind, quenched in blood and going down into the darkness of an endless night.

If, on the other hand, the great Republic, by the divine blessing and favor in this hour of her extremest peril, is found equal to the fearful crisis of her destiny; if the people of the United States are found ready to endure the sacrifices which the occasion demands of them; if they pledge their lives and fortunes for unity and liberty; if, standing by the altars of the Most High God, this free Christian nation with hands uplifted toward Heaven swear to transmit unimpaired to posterity the sacred inheritance of their fathers, then in the issue of this dreadful conflict will be seen and acknowledged the real strength of a free Government and a free people; then it will be confessed by all men that the American Republic is no longer an experiment.

If the foul conspiracy nursed in the lap of our sad inheritance of domestic despotism, the unhappy legacy of English avarice and oppression, is put down by the strong hand; if henceforth the system of human servitude is compelled to abandon its arrogant claims and take a lower place in the counsels of the nation, waiting the few days of its appointed time, "till its change come," then shall the words of this ancient prophecy fall on our ears and be fulfilled in our experience: "Arise, shine, for thy light has come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee, and the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising; thy sons shall come from afar, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side, and the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee; for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favor I have had mercy upon thee, therefore shalt thy gates be open continually, they shall not be shut day nor night; violence shall be no more heard in thy land, wasting nor desolation within thy borders, but they shall call thy walls SALVATION and thy gates PRAISE."